Amateur Radio Newsline(tm) Report 1788 - November 18 2011

Amateur Radio Newsline report number 1788 with a release date of Friday, November 18th, 2011 to follow in 5-4-3-2-1.

The following is a Q-S-T. Ham radio and the National Weather Service cooperate in a severe weather event in Alaska, rescue radio stands down in Italy and Turkey, more intruders are found on 10 meters and an in-depth look at the November 9th National E-A-S test. Was it a success or a failure? Find out the details are on Amateur Radio Newsline(tm) report number 1788 coming your way right now.

(Billboard Cart Here)

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RESCUE RADIO: HAMS LAUDED IN THE WAKE OF EARLY SEASON ALASKA STORM

Ham radio has been highlighted in the November 12th issue of the Alaska Dispatch. This after an early season storm hit the most-Northern state. Amateur Radio Newsline's Bill Pasternak, WA6ITF, has the details:

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According to the news article, when it became clear the Bering Sea storm was going to be a major severe weather incident the National Weather Service got word out to Alaska's amateur radio network that it wanted help. And as crashing waves pounded beaches, the people who live in the remote, isolated villages along the storm's path stayed connected via a web created by Alaska's ham radio community.

When other communications failed, ham radio operators came to the rescue. Throughout the storm, they were the eyes for scientists and weather forecasters in Fairbanks and Anchorage who otherwise would have been isolated from the severe weather conditions they could predict but not see.

Carven Scott, is a forecaster with the National Weather Service in Anchorage. He told the newspaper that it was hams that were providing critical observations as the storm blew past. Scott noted that the N-W-S does not have much in the way of meteorological observations in the western part of the state but hams kept his agency alerted to the latest conditions in remote areas. This included such data as how fast the wind was blowing and from what direction; wave height; whether it was snowing or raining; and the temperature. Scott says that these seemingly small details from various villages made a big difference for the weather service in its predictions.

Scott credits Richard Courtney, NL9H, as the ham radio operator who came up with the idea of an alliance between Alaska's ham community and the weather forecasters. Scott said that he had for some time thought that amateur radio would be a good communications supplement. With the

Bering Sea storm approaching the Alaska coast, Scott said that they decided to give it a shot.

Scott told the newspaper that through the ham radio network he and his colleagues learned that river ice in Koyuk was backing up and spilling onto the banks. Also that roofs had blown off and water was surging in Nome, and rain and snow were falling in several other villages.

The story also highlights the work of Martin Ruud, WL7MR, in the city of Nome. From Tuesday night as the storm approached through the following Thursday morning, WL7MR forwarded messages from islands and other coastal communities. The newspaper says that Ruud had draped sleeping bags over his windows to protect himself and his equipment in case a wind gust shattered the glass. Outside, a 160-meter loop antenna stood ready atop four telephone poles the city of Nome gave to him for free, knowing he could put people in contact with the outside world when other methods failed.

For the Amateur Radio Newsline, I'm Bill Pasternak, WA6ITF, in the Newsroom in Los Angeles.

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The entire story of ham radios role in this major Alaskan winter severe weather outburst can be read on-line at tinyurl.com/alaska-storm (Alaska Dispatch)

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RESCUE RADIO: MARITIME MOBILE NET IN CREW RESCUE

The South African Maritime Net recently assisted in the rescue of the crew of the sailing vessel "Wizard" owned Gerry Boshoff, ZS6SUN . This after the yacht struck a submersed container and began taking on water.

Boshoff maintained regular contact with the South African

Maritime Net which enabled Graham Griggs, ZS2ABK, to supply

the maritime authorities with needed information as to the

yachts location and condition. This allowed rescue

personnel to reach the location and to the crew being saved.

At last report all were taken aboard a tanker which had been

diverted to the spot where the sailing vessel sank.

(SARL)

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RESCUE RADIO: ITALY AND TURKEY SECURE HF EMCOMM OPERATIONS Italian and Turkish High Frequency emergency operations on the 80 and 40 meter bands have been secured. As such there is no further need to take care

when operating around 3.643, 3.760MHz on 80 meters and 7.045 and 7.060 and 7.092 and 7.095 MHz on 40.

Keeping clear of these frequencies had been requested RNRE in Italy for relief efforts following the flooding in the North West of that country and TRAC for the Earthquake in Van province of Turkey. Both groups have offered their thanks to the world ham radio community for its cooperation during those hectic times.

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ENFORCEMENT: AUSTRALIA'S ACMA ACTS AGAINST HOBBY RADIO RULES VIOLATORS

The recent issuing of warning notices and confiscations in four states by the Australian Communications and Media Authority or ACMA shows it's serious about infringements by hobby communicators.

Under the Radiocommunications Act, six individuals were given a warning for their unlicensed operation and two additional warnings of possession of modified amateur radio equipment.

The ACMA said all were operating on HF frequencies they were not licensed to use, or allocated to the Amateur Service. A range of non-compliant equipment has been surrendered to the ACMA.

A 70 Watt CB radio in Victoria, a 40 Watt CB radio and 400 Watt linear amplifier in South Australia, a modified Kenwood ham band transceiver from Tasmania, 70 watt CB radio and 600 watt linear amplifier in New South Wales.

The ACMA said operating non-compliant or modified radio communications equipment on frequency bands contrary to that specified by a license condition, had the potential to cause serious interference to radio communications services.

While the ACMA prefers to educate those who operate outside their license conditions, it will suspend or cancel licenses, issue infringement notices, or commence prosecutions for more serious offences.

For the Amateur Radio Newsline, I'm Graham Kemp, VK4BB, of the WIA News, in Brisbane, Australia. (WIA News, VK3PC)

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INTRUDER WATCH: PROBLEMS WORSENING ON 10 METERS AS MUF RISES

A recent issue of the IARU Monitoring System newsletter reports that the intruder situation on 10 meters is getting worse as the Maximum Usable Frequency or M-U-F continues to rise in Solar Cycle 24.

The report said that it found much CB-like traffic using AM, FM and SSB between 28 and 29.7 MHz in September and again in October 2011. It pegs Europe, Brazil and the Far East as the primary originating points for most of the illegal 10 meter traffic. The report goes on to say that the band is also still filled with numerous taxi cabs operating FM.

The report says that with conditions on the upper High Frequency bands improving that we could soon witness what it calls the "apocalypse" on the amateur- exclusive 10 meter band. The newsletter also describes interference on the 24 MHz band from Codar Radar and numerous "CB" operators taking to those airwaves as well.

As reported last week, Russia has agreed to do all it can to remove illegal taxi radio operators from the 10 meter band but just how successful that move will be remains to be seen.

(IARU-R1)

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BREAK 1

>From the United States of America, We are the Amateur Radio Newsline, heard on bulletin stations around the world including the N3EVW repeater serving Scranton, Pennsylvania.

(5 sec pause here)

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RESCUE RADIO: THE FIRST NATIONAL EAS TEST - A PARTIAL SUCCESS AND A PARTIAL FAILURE

If you were listening to a radio or watching television at 2

p.m. Eastern U-S time on Wednesday, November 9th this is

what you may have heard:

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Actual test audio air-check.

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That's the sound of the nations first ever national test of the Emergency Alert or E-A-S system. Here's Robert Sudock, WB6FDF, with a look at what happened and possibly why:

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In a November 11th letter to the CGC Communicator broadcast industry newsletter, Richard Rudman, W6TIA, who is the California State Emergency Communications Committee EAS Vice Chairman writes that FEMA, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, will hopefully release the details soon. That said, from some post-test recordings that he has listened to he believes that there is a very strong likelihood that the audio loop-back that many heard occurred at the FEMA warning origination point. Rudman says that there are other theories being advanced, but that we will have to wait for FEMA to issue its official post-test report to know with 100% certainty exactly what happened and what will be done to prevent this from happening in the future.

Rudman who is one of the architects of emergency public alert systems going back several decades says that while a large number of people and media outlets still represent the test as a "failure" it wasn't that at all. Rudman says that he wants to strongly restate his feeling that we need to look beyond the audio shortcomings and concentrate on the many things that went right with the EAS relay system, and on the distribution infrastructure and equipment issues that will require EAS public and private stakeholder cooperation to fix.

Rudman adds that at some point in the near future we will find out if our government is serious about warnings or not. This he says includes dollars for training from origination point on through; dollars for redundant and resilient warning distribution infrastructure and now the will on the part of FEMA and the FCC for as rapid a transition from SAME EAS to CAP EAS as possible, with wired and wireless paths for CAP distribution that back up Internet distribution.

But back in the nation's capitol, FEMA Integrated Public Alert and Warning System Program Director Manny Centeno has a different view. In an interview with Radio World magazine, Centeno claims that the test went off on time, and was delivered across the country. He says that the quality of the originating message was clear for the first four seconds; however a technical malfunction occurred at a national primary level that introduced dual header tones and subsequently decreased the original audio quality of the message for downstream stations. Centeno says that this resulted in distorted audio.

According to Centeno, the Federal Emergency Management Agency delivered

the audio to more than 60 Primary Entry Point stations that were all on a telephone conference bridge during the event. All the national primary stations were connected during the test. Asked whether a particular station introduced the bad audio, Centeno said FEMA is looking into how the audio was introduced into the system and is re-creating the anomaly in its lab.

Centeno reiterated that last the November 9th test will not be the last. He says that FEMA looks forward to approaching the community with lessons learned, hearing their observations in an open forum, and continuing to improve the Best Practices Guide as well as the EAS system on a national scale.

But there is one issue that has yet to be addressed. That's the human issue of whether FEMA is expecting to much from the public when it holds an E-A-S test. This is because the average radio listener and TV viewer is used to great sounding audio all of the time. And what planners of the EA-S within FEMA and other government lettered agencies have yet to realize is that even in the clear and without a loop back problem, communications quality audio of 300 to 3000 Hz is going to sound really lousy on even the cheapest of pocket radios and that when the public hears alert tones that sound like bursts of static, many are going to simply tune out.

These agencies also seem to not realize what Richard Rudman and other E-A-S technologists do. That being in time of a real crisis situation that the Internet and much of the nation's landline communications may be down and that an alternate means of alerting the nations population is needed.

The bottom line is that the current E-A-S system may be a bit to complex for its own good. Some of us old enough to remember the days of the old Conelrad emergency alerting system tests that began in 1951 and continued until 1963. Those people also recall how well it worked because of its simplicity. It did not rely on computer routing and an immense software controlled hihgherarchy. Rather it placed its trust in the hands of human beings and only once in its history did that human system ever fail.

For the Amateur Radio Newsline, I'm Robert Sudock, WB6FDF, in Los Angeles.

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If you have never heard a Conelrad alert but would like to, then take your web browser to tinyurl.com/first-conelrad test. And yes, things were much simpler back then. (Adapted from the CGC Communicator, RW, others)

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BANDPLANNING: ARRL AD HOC COMMITTEE ON MICROWAVE BANDS

And this for hams who like to operate in the

microwave spectrum. An ARRL Ad Hoc Committee

has been tasked by the Leagues Board of

Directors with recommending updates to the ARRL

band plans for the amateur bands between 902 MHz

and 3.5 GHz. If you are now active on any of

these bands or are developing plans to do so,

the committee would like to hear from you. The

band plans for these bands may be found at

www.arrl.org/band-plan-1. Comments go via the

ARRL website at www.arrl.org/microwave-band-plan-

input-form. You have till December 15th to

respond.

(WA6ILQ. W9QZB, others)

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HAM HAPPENINGS: FROSTFEST 2012 IN RICHMOND

VIRGINIA

Turning to the ham radio social scene, Frostfest 2012, sponsored by the Richmond Amateur Telecommunications Society, takes place on Saturday, February 4th. This event features manufacturer's representatives from major equipment makers, new equipment vendors, 300 tables of indoor flea market sales, VE Testing, DXCC Card Checking, forums and meetings. The venue is the Richmond Raceway Complex in Richmond Virginia. This event is also the ARRL Virginia State Convention. More is on-line at www.frostfest.com.

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HAM HAPPENINGS: 15th INTERNATIONAL EME CONFERENCE TWEETING

There is now an official Twitter information

feed for the upcoming 15th International E-M-E

Conference. That happening is to be held in

Cambridge, United Kingdom, August 16th to the

18th of 2012. The Twitter feed can be found at

twitter.com/moonbounce2012. For more

information on the conference take your web

browser to www.eme2012.com (Southgate)

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HAM HAPPENINGS: DAYTON HAMVENTION TOPS 22,000

IN 2011

Its taken a few months to compile, but according to Dayton Hamvention on-line Moderator Bill Curtice, WA8ABP, the official attendance for the 2011 gathering has been tallied at 22,312. That appears to be up by several hundred over 2009 and 2010. It is a sign that at least the health of the ham radio economy is improving even if that of the rest of the nation seems to be lagging behind. The information was posted to the Hamvention reflector on Sunday, November 13th.

(Hamventionr News Group, WA8ABP)

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BREAK 2

This is ham radio news for today's radio amateur. From the United States of America, We are the Amateur Radio Newsline with links to the world from our only

official website at www.arnewsline.org and

being relayed by the volunteer services of

the following radio amateur:

(5 sec pause here)

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RADIO TECHNOLOGY: PROBLEMS WITH P25 SECURITY

While it's not of much concern to hams who have adopted Project 25 digital audio, researchers looking at the security of this system have discovered that it's easily jammed, and almost as easily compromised. And all of this can be accomplished using a kid's toy. Amateur Radio Newsline welcomes Heather Butera-Howell, KB3TZD, to the Amateur Radio Newsline family. She has this report:

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During a two-year study, researchers from the University of Pennsylvania found that encryption on a police P 25 network was not only routinely switched off, but also demonstrated how a 25 dollar toy called the "GirlTECH IM me" could be reprogrammed to jam transmissions and even exclude specific users or subnets. It also showed how a more-expensive option could track a specific user.

P 25 is the United States equivalent to the trans-European Trunked Radio or TETRA digital audio radio system. But unlike TETRA, which is deployed in a dedicated and fairly secure radio spectrum, P 25 had to be compatible with the existing analog systems, and is thus squeezed into a fixed 12.5 kilohertz split-channel spacing. However, that is not the only thing making it vulnerable. According to the report P 25 uses fixed-length packets, optionally encrypted using a symmetric key, distributed to handsets manually or over the air.

They say that the first problem is the key distribution doesn't always work. As such the research team found users frequently get cut out and have to ask the rest of the group to switch off encryption for the duration of the operation. Individual users can also, inadvertently, switch off their own encryption without other users being alert enough to notice.

The researcher's 16 page report does have practical advice for users of the P 25 digital audio mode. It suggests reprogramming handsets to make switching off encryption less obvious, and reminding users when it has been switched off. But the team also concludes that fundamentally the P 25 system wasn't designed with a properly layered security model, and that this will always leave it more vulnerable than it should be.

For the Amateur Radio Newsline, I'm Heather Butera-Howell, KB3TZD, in Pennsylvania.

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More about this issue with the P-25 system is on-line at tinyurl.com/p25-secure (The A Register)

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HAM RADIO IN SPACE: KC5ZSX NOW ON THE ISS

Amid steady snow, a Soyuz TMA-22 spacecraft roared to life from the Bikenour Cosmodrome in Kazikstan at 10:14 G-M-T one Monday, November 14th. On board were United States Astronaut Daniel Burbank KC5ZSX along with commander Anton Shkaplerov and engineer Anatoly Ivanishin.

The three were supposed to have launched on September 22. That went on-hold after an unmanned Progress cargo ship suffered a third stage malfunction during launch August 24th and failed to reach orbit. The third stage of the cargo craft's rocket is virtually identical to the one used in the manned version.

The three Expedition 29 space explorers docked with the ISS on Wednesday, November 16th. All the current Expedition 29 I-S-S crew members are radio amateurs. This includes commander Michael Fossum KF5AQG, Sergei Volkov U4MIR and Satoshi Furukawa KE5DAW. Once they return to Earth on November 21st, Daniel Burbank KC5ZSX will be the Expedition 30 commander and also become the only radio amateur on the ISS until the next crew change about 6 months from now. More is on-line at spaceflightnow.com.

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HAM RADIO IN SPACE: RESEARCHER SAYS ARISSAT-1 WILL DEORBIT IN APRIL

The ARISSat-1 satellite is due to re-enter Earth's atmosphere in early April 2012. This, according to predictions from Mineo Wakita, JE9PEL, made on his website at tinyurl.com/7qw2nt9.

At his site JE9PEL has posted charts that show the slowly declining orbit of ARISSat-1 which was hand launched from the International Space Station back on August 8th. If his predictions hold accurate then ARISSat-1 still has several months left on-orbit before it meets a fiery demise as it reenters the Earths atmosphere. Meantime the satellite remains quite active and has become one of the most popular birds since the start of ham radios operations from space.

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COMING TO THE AIR: MARCH 2012 DXPEDITION NEEDS MORE OPERATORS

Planning is well underway for an upcoming DXpedition to Botswana, but more operators are needed. This according to organizer Charles Frost, K5LBU, who tells the Ohio Pen DX Newsletter that the operation appears to have lost 3 members for the March 2012 DXpedition and that its looking for replacements who might like to go with it.

K5LBU who is better known as Frosty says that the current plan is to arrive in Johannesburg, South Africa on March 15th. They will then spend 3 nights in a game park on the way to Botswana arriving at the Lotsane Lodge on March 18th and returning to Johannesburg on the 28th. He adds that they will operate as A25HQ in the CQ WPX Contest while there.

According to K5LBU in addition to transportation to and from Johannesburg the cost is $235 a day per person

and this covers all meals, transport and

lodging. All you will need is your laptop for

logging and a key and headset. Equipment the

DXpedition is bringing along includes an Icom

746 Pro, a Yaesu FT 450 and at least one Expert

1K-FA amplifiers. Antennas are a T6 Log

Periodic, an HF2V, and a folded dipole that

covers 160 through10 meters also. If you would

like to go please E-mail Frosty to 3da0cf (at)

gmail (dot) com.

OPDX

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DX

In DX, JH1NBN will be active as 8Q7ZB from the Maldives Islands through November 29th. Operations are on the HF bands, propagation permitting. He may also enter the CQ World Wide DX CW Contest on November 26th and the 27th. QSL via his home callsign, either direct or via the bureau.

K9NW will be active as C91NW from Mozambique through November 29th. His operations will be on 160 through 10 meters using CW, SSB, RTTY and possibly 6 meters as well. QSL via his home callsign.

A large multi-national team will be on the air from Nepal until November 25th. The callsign to look out for is 9N7MD. Activity will be on all bands in SSB, CW and RTTY. The QSL Manager is IK2VUC and logs will also be uploaded to Logbook of the World.

Lastly, DK9PY will be operational portable FG from Guadeloupe through November 26th. Activity will be only CW mainly on the 30, 17 and 12 meter bands. Also listen out on 80, 40, 20, 15 and 10 meters usually at about 15 kHz from the bottom of the band edge. QSL via his home callsign, either direct or by the bureau.

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THAT FINAL ITEM: VISITING GERMANYS HAM RADIO CONVENTION THANKS TO THE CAMERA OF DC3AQ

And finally this week, a new video about the HAMRADIO 2011 convention

in Friedrichshafen, Germany, last spring is now on-line. Often called the Dayton of Europe, this years HAMRADIO featured 184 exhibitors, representatives from 29 countries and an attendance up with the biggest shows. These three factors made it a truly international event.

The show was produced by Matthias Schilhab,

DC3AQ, and uses only video and the voices of the

attendees to tell the story of HAMRADIO as seen

through the eyes of each person interviewed and

presented in that person's home language. For

example, here is a sample from those who

expressed their view of the event in the English

language:

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Actual show audio sample.

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According to film maker DC3AQ, he decided not to narrate or to translate the film because he and his crew didn't know whether to release it in German, English, or Spanish. Instead, he calls the on-line release his polyglot version with each language standing on its own. Hence its title of HAMRADIO 2011 Polyglot.

You can view this 14 minute movie on-line at tinyurl.com/dc3aq-DL-Movie. And less we forget to mention, DC3AQ says that he funded this project himself without any support any sponsor or radio club. We say bravo on this very special gift from him to the world-wide amateur radio community. (DC3AQ, ARNewsline(tm))

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NEWSCAST CLOSE

With thanks to Alan Labs, AMSAT, the ARRL, the CGC Communicator, CQ Magazine, the FCC, the Ohio Penn DX Bulletin, Radio Netherlands, Rain, the RSGB, the Southgate News and Australia's WIA News, that's all from the Amateur Radio Newsline(tm). Our e-mail address is newsline(at) arnewsline (dot) org. More information is available at Amateur Radio Newsline's(tm) only official website located at www.arnewsline.org. You can also write to us or support us at Amateur Radio Newsline(tm), 28197 Robin Avenue, Santa Clarita California, 91350

For now, with Bill Pasternak, WA6ITF, at the editors desk, I'm Jim Damron, N8TMW, in Chasrleston, West Virginia, saying 73 and we thank you for listening.

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